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REMARKS

Applicant acknowledges the Examiner's review of the specification, claims, and drawings. In light of the above amendments and following remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application. The amendments and remarks presented herein are fully supported by the application as originally filed. No new matter has been entered.

STATUS OF THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1-20 are pending in the application. Claims 17-20 have been added herein. All claims stand rejected.

CLAIM OBJECTIONS:

Claims 8, 15, and 16 are objected to as lacking proper antecedent basis for the claim language.

Applicant has amended Claims 7, 14, and 15 to provide proper antecedent basis for the claim language. Claim 16 has been amended to delete the reference to "engagement arm". Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the claim objections.

CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102:

The Examiner rejects Claims 1-4, 9, and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 1,914,840 to Wolff.

Applicant respectfully traverses. Notwithstanding, Applicant has amended Claims 1 and 9 to more clearly define Applicant's invention which now calls for:

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1. (currently amended) A garment hanger comprising:
a hook portion having a generally C-shaped portion with an upper portion, a lower portion, and an open side between said upper portion and said lower portion for receiving a support bar therethrough;
first and second arms extending outwardly from said hook portion for supporting an article of clothing on said garment hanger, said lower portion being joined with and integral with said arms and thereby reinforcing said arms; and
wherein said hook portion is adapted to open said open side for receiving the support bar therethrough and releasably retaining said hook portion on the support bar and to be retained on said support bar even when said garment hanger is subject to vibration or movement relative to the support bar, said lower portion being sufficiently stiff to substantially remain stationary relative to said upper portion when said hook portion is urged into engagement with the support bar wherein the upper portion deflects to open said open side.

9. (currently amended) A garment hanger comprising:
a hook portion for engaging a support bar, said hooked portion having and upper portion and a lower portion and an open side therebetween for receiving the support bar; and
first and second arms extending outwardly and downwardly from said hooked portion, each of said first and second arms having a support surface for hanging a garment on said first and second arms, and said lower portion being joined with said arms wherein said lower portion reinforces said arms and is sufficiently stiff to substantially remain stationary relative to said upper portion and wherein said upper portion deflects to open said open side and forms said hold portion forming a spring for releasably retaining said hook portion on the support bar.

With respect to Claim 1, Applicant respectfully urges that Wolff does not disclose or suggest, for example, a garment hanger that includes a hook portion having a generally C-shaped portion with an upper portion, a lower portion, and an open side between the upper portion and the lower portion for receiving a support bar therethrough with the lower portion being joined with and integral with the arms that extend outwardly from the hook

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portion for supporting an article of clothing on the garment hanger. Nor does Wolff disclose or suggest the lower portion being sufficiently stiff to substantially remain stationary relative to the upper portion when the hook portion is urged into engagement with the support bar wherein the upper portion deflects to open the open side. In contrast, Wolff discloses a hook portion in which both the upper portion and the lower portion deflect to receive the support bar therein. Therefore, Applicant respectfully urges that Claim 1 and its dependent claims, namely Claims 2-8 and 17, are patentably distinguishable over Wolff.

With respect to Claim 9, Applicant respectfully urges that Wolff does not disclose or suggest a garment hanger including a hook portion for engaging a support bar, with the hook portion having an upper portion and a lower portion and an open side therebetween in combination with the first and second arms extending outwardly and downwardly from the hook portion with the lower portion of the hook portion being joined with the arms wherein the lower portion reinforces the arms and is sufficiently stiff to substantially remain stationary relative to the upper portion wherein the upper portion deflects to open the open side and, further, forms a spring for releasably retaining the hook portion on the support bar. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully urges that Claim 9 and its dependent claims, namely Claims 10-16 and 18, are patentably distinguishable over Wolff alone or in combination with any other reference or record.

CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103:

The Examiner rejects Claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wolff in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,080,268 to Rios and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 2,637,472 to Lyons.

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With respect to Claim 5, Claim 5 depends from amended Claim 1 and, thus, incorporates the same limitations as amended Claim 1. In addition, Claim 5 calls for the wire member to comprise a plastic wire member. Applicant respectfully urges that it would not be obvious to modify the Wolff garment hanger to be formed out of a plastic wire member as suggested by the Examiner. Wolff specifically teaches the use of two arcuate spring metal jaws to extend substantially parallel with each other. Further, the Wolff patent describes that the essential characteristics of his invention is the combination of a member for supporting a garment and of a suspension means embodying therein two spring metal jaws. Applicant respectfully urges that it would not be obvious to modify Wolff to form the components of the Wolff hanger out of plastic since such a modification would contradict the express teachings of Wolff. Therefore, such a proposed modification would not be obvious. Furthermore, even when combined, the combined references do not teach the claimed combination. For example, neither Rios nor Lyons discloses or suggests a garment hanger that includes a hook portion having a generally C-shaped portion with an upper portion, a lower portion, and an open side between the upper portion and with the lower portion for receiving a support bar therethrough being joined with and integral with the arms that extend outwardly from the hook portion for supporting an article of clothing on the garment hanger.

The Examiner rejects Claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wolff in view of Rios and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,666,149 to Woodhull.

With respect to Claim 6, Claim 6 depends from amended Claim 1 and, thus, incorporates the same limitations as amended Claim 1. Therefore, Claim 6 is patentably distinguishable over Wolff for at least the reasons set forth in reference to Claim 1.

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Furthermore, Applicant respectfully urges that neither Rios nor Woodhull cures the deficiencies of Wolff. Therefore, even when combined, the combined references do not disclose or suggest the claimed combination. Therefore, Claim 6 is patentably distinguishable over Wolff in view of Rios or Woodhull or any other reference of record.

The Examiner rejects Claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wolff in view of Rios and Lyons and, further, in view of Woodhull.

With respect to Claim 8, Claim 8 depends from Claim 1 and thus incorporates the same limitations as amended Claim 1. Therefore, Claim 8 is patentably distinguishable over Wolff for at least the reasons set forth above. Furthermore, Applicant respectfully urges that none of Rios, Lyons, or Woodhull cures the deficiencies of Wolff. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully urges that Claim 8 is patentably distinguishable over Wolff in view of Rios, Lyons, or Woodhull.

The Examiner rejects Claims 10 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wolff in view of Lyons.

Claims 10 and 11 depend from amended Claim 9 and thus incorporate the same limitations as amended Claim 9. Applicant respectfully urges that Lyons does not cure the deficiencies of Wolff. For example, Lyons does not disclose or suggest a garment hanger including a hook portion for engaging a support bar, with the hook portion having an upper portion and a lower portion and an open side therebetween in combination with the first and second arms extending outwardly and downwardly from the hook portion with the lower portion of the hook portion being joined with the arms wherein the lower portion reinforces the arms and is sufficiently stiff to substantially remain stationary relative to the upper

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portion wherein the upper portion deflects to open the open side and, further, forms a spring for releasably retaining the hook portion on the support bar. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully urges that Claims 10 and 11 are patentably distinguishable over Wolff in view of Lyons or any other reference of record.

The Examiner rejects Claims 12 and 14-16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Wolff in view of Woodhull.

Claims 12 and 14-16 are ultimately dependent upon amended Claim 9 and, thus, incorporate the same limitations as amended Claim 9. Further Woodhull does not cure the deficiencies of Wolff. For example, Woodhull does not disclose or suggest a garment hanger including a hook portion for engaging a support bar, with the hook portion having an upper portion and a lower portion and an open side therebetween in combination with the first and second arms extending outwardly and downwardly from the hook portion with the lower portion of the hook portion being joined with the arms wherein the lower portion reinforces the arms and is sufficiently stiff to substantially remain stationary relative to the upper portion wherein the upper portion deflects to open the open side and, further, forms a spring for releasably retaining the hook portion on the support bar. Therefore, Applicant respectfully urges that Claims 12 and 14-16 are patentably distinguishable over Wolff in view of Woodhull or any other reference of record.

Accordingly, in light of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application and a Notice of Allowance of all claims, namely Claims 1-20.

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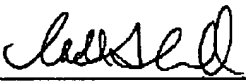
Should the Examiner have any questions or suggestions, he is invited to
contact the undersigned at (616) 975-5506 or at collins@vglb.com.

Respectfully submitted,

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